

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OCT 15 PM 3 33

SITE

B

S/S #



16 OCT 11
4:12

16 OCT 15
3 58 PM '01


LDX MESSAGE NO. 000516 CLASSIFICATION _____ No. Pages 6

FROM: Wever Gim (Officer name) INR/EAP (Office symbol) 21338 (Extension) 8840 (Room number)

MESSAGE DESCRIPTION Draft letter

LDX TO: (Agency)	DELIVER TO:	Extension	Room No.	
CIA			7E62	25X1
	<i>Brk - Let's discuss 130</i>			25X1

REMARKS: FOR: ☐ CLEARANCE ☐ INFORMATION ☐ PER REQUEST ☐ COMMENT ☐

S/S Officer: 

State Dept. review completed

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Reflecting on some of the questions you asked at the intelligence briefing on Kampuchea on October 13, we have some additional points for your attention and that of the subcommittee.

Question: What are Vietnamese objectives in Kampuchea and Laos?

Do they intend to establish a permanent presence? Are they trying to colonize Kampuchea and Laos?

Our view of Vietnam's short term tactical and military objectives in Indochina was presented in our submitted written statement. These objectives complement and support Hanoi's longer term strategic goal of maintaining Vietnamese control of Laos and Kampuchea through the installation of indigenous client regimes that are responsive to Vietnamese interests. With a population 8 to 10 times larger than that of either Laos or Kampuchea and historic claims to regional preeminence, Vietnam seems determined that its Indochina sphere of influence will not be subject to threats or harassments such as those mounted by Pol Pot in 1977-78. In pursuance of this goal, Hanoi installed both regimes whose key leaders were trained in Vietnam or have worked closely with the Vietnamese for years. In addition to the Vietnamese troops which garrison Kampuchea and Laos, Vietnamese advisers serve in nearly every Kampuchean and Laotian ministry. They provide administrative expertise and assess the loyalty and cooperation of their indigenous colleagues. Lest they arouse nationalist reactions against Vietnam, Hanoi does not put Vietnamese in these ministries in leadership positions. Instead, it continues to train indigenous cadre in Vietnam ^(as a means of perpetuating its control) At the same time it has sought through ^(propaganda campaigns and diplomatic maneuvers) to internationalize the legitimacy of its client regimes.

-2-

Question: Is the KPNLF mounting operations in Kampuchea, does it have camps there, and is it an active, viable resistance movement?

Although KPNLF forces constitute a small and fragile resistance movement that lacks fighting experience, its potential should not be dismissed on this basis. We do not have detailed, reliable information on the KPNLF, but we believe that it has made some improvements in its capabilities and performance during the last 18 months by forming a unified command, establishing slightly more dependable bases of support, providing military training courses for recruits and instilling greater discipline in its units. Recent reports indicate that KPNLF troops may number a few thousand more than previously reported (5,000-8,000 instead of 3,000-6,000). The organization has been successful in recruiting in the border refugee encampments, and it enjoys a measure of sympathy and support among the general populace in the interior of Kampuchea. (The KPNLF headquarters is located in northwestern Kampuchea close to the Thai border village of Ban Sa Ngae. In addition, it has three subordinate regional headquarters located along the Thai border inside Kampuchea.)

The KPNLF acquired limited supplies of Chinese arms only about six months ago, prior to that time many soldiers did not have adequate weaponry or ammunition. Consequently KPNLF military activities were almost totally defensive and focussed on survival, although sabotage and hit-and-run tactics occasionally have been directed at Vietnamese installations and patrols. In recent months, KPNLF units have begun to conduct limited patrols and

may have worked out accommodations with a few local People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) military units not to initiate hostilities. Shortages of military and food supplies continue to inhibit KPNLF attempts to expand its military activities, effectiveness, and popular support. Similarly, the lack of experienced military leadership remains a serious problem.

With improving prospects for negotiating a coalition with other resistance groups, KPNLF leaders have probably tended to husband their military strength lest their limited military leverage be lessened by casualties. With greater material and personnel resources, however, the KPNLF could make significant progress in upgrading its capabilities. Nevertheless, the KPNLF forces will have to improve dramatically before they could mount a serious challenge to Vietnamese military units in Kampuchea or those of the DK. (We have enclosed a recent updated assessment of the KPNLF military capabilities for your information.)

Question: Why do the Thai continue to assist the DK resistance?

Don't the Thai perceive that with a lessening of the DK resistance there would be a reduction of the Vietnamese forces and a lessening of the border tensions?

The Thai would not agree with the premise of this question, i.e., that there is no immediate or long term threat to Thailand from Vietnam. Thai concerns about the security of the long, porous borders with Laos and Kampuchea date from the 1960s and stem not from fear of the Laotians and Kampuchians, both of whom the Thai greatly outnumber, but of the Vietnamese Communists. Hanoi's victory over Saigon and its occupation of Kampuchea and

NO

??

Company

is this the CIA/State Paper?

domination of Laos have greatly intensified Thai apprehensions.

These concerns include fears that: Hanoi will use Kampuchea and Laos as bases for infiltration and support of Thai Communist insurgents; Vietnam will exploit Lao and Kampuchean irredentist

claims on Thailand's 16 northeast provinces to threaten and acquire Thai territory; Hanoi will use the 40,000 to 50,000

Vietnamese resident in northeast Thailand for subversive purposes and in cooperation with or through the Vietnamese, the Soviet Union will entrench itself in Southeast Asia. The Vietnamese incursion of

June 1980 into Thai territory ^{heightened} ~~did nothing to allay~~ these concerns.

Thailand thus sees advantage in maintaining a buffer zone along the border, ^{It is also anxious to maintain} ~~and in invoking~~ the collective security ^{concept} ~~arrangements~~ provided by ASEAN as well as cooperation with the Chinese to

provide effective means of countering Vietnamese pressures. The

Thais are also hopeful that with the creation of a coalition of Kampuchean resistance groups, ^{the} military struggle will prove so costly that Hanoi will eventually settle for a negotiated political

solution and withdraw its troops. Thai apprehensions about the

Vietnamese/Soviet threat to the region are shared by ~~Singapore~~ ^{its} and ~~the Philippines~~, two ASEAN neighbors, ^{notably Singapore and the Philippines.}

Question: Have the Vietnamese provided US-origin military equipment to other Central American countries?

~~[There is some evidence that]~~ Hanoi has provided small arms to insurgents in El Salvador and Guatemala. Earlier this year the Vietnamese reportedly agreed to provide Nicaragua with combat aircraft, possibly including F-5s and UH-1 helicopter gunships, but we have seen no signs of actual deliveries. We do not know how any of this equipment was transferred.

Question: What are PRC objectives and motives in Indochina?

Is China really interested in a political settlement or only in bleeding the Vietnamese in Kampuchea in an effort to drive a wedge between Hanoi and Moscow? Does the PRC provide backing for the Kampuchean resistance only to facilitate the return of Pol Pot with no expectation of free elections or a Vietnamese withdrawal?

Beijing's objectives in Kampuchea are directly related to China's strategic concerns about Soviet expansionism, Vietnam's alliance with Moscow, and the need to heighten ASEAN awareness of the Soviet/Vietnamese threat. China's primary objectives are optimally to force Vietnam out of Kampuchea, thus seriously reducing if not eliminating Vietnamese dominance; to loosen Hanoi's ties with Moscow, thus limiting Soviet access to the region; to compel Vietnam to take greater account of Chinese interests; and to develop close Sino-ASEAN relations. These are essentially the same motives that impelled Beijing to undertake its costly incursion into Vietnam in January 1979, and Beijing is therefore well aware of the difficult and long term nature of its objectives.

The PRC is convinced that without the exactions of military pressure, Hanoi cannot be forced into political negotiations over Kampuchea. Contending correctly that the DK is the principal Khmer source of military pressure on Hanoi, Beijing has been the staunchest and chief supporter of the DK cause both materially and politically. Without Thailand's cooperation, however, the Chinese could not effectively maintain sufficient material support to the DK, and they therefore must weigh and adjust to Thai and ASEAN policies about a political settlement. Furthermore, China's own strategic

objective of loosening Hanoi's ties with Moscow is not achievable without political negotiation and compromise.

The issue ^{on} which Beijing has been insistent is not that Pol Pot's regime must be returned to power but that international anti-Vietnamese political efforts supporting Khmer resistance must not undercut the DK cause ^{and} capabilities ~~and~~ even before Hanoi shows any inclination to negotiate, lest the most viable element of Khmer resistance collapse. The PRC well understands the importance of the Khmer resistance coalition to an effective anti-Vietnamese effort. Beijing has also recognized that the international image of the DK needs improvement and accordingly has attempted to persuade the DK to compromise. Moreover, Chinese leaders have not objected to the proposal of free elections after a Vietnamese withdrawal. The Chinese have both publicly and privately stated, however, that they cannot interfere in ^{the} negotiations between the Khmer groups and that there are limits to which they and the DK will go. Beijing has also emphasized that the negotiations are likely to be difficult and must be complete and comprehensive in order to prevent the coalition, once formed, from unravelling.

I hope the above information usefully supplements our earlier submitted statement.

Sincerely yours,

Philip Stoddard

Drafted: INR/EAP:WGim/AKitchens/INR/PMA-JDPeterson

Clearances: H-Mr. Itoh
EA/
EA/VLK-Mr. Anderson
EA/T- Mr. HOWLAND
EA/C-